

The Cultures and Traditions Need to be Respected

In August 2017, Metro Style interviewed Mr. Gavin Rimmer, the General Manager of Red Wall Garden Hotel.

A 23-year veteran hotelier and British citizen, Gavin Rimmer has worked with some of the top leading hotels throughout Europe, South Africa, America and The Middle East and he is now based in China facilitating the owners on new projects and developments on behalf of STEM™ management group, and also leading the team as General Manager of The Red Wall Garden Hotel in Beijing since 2014. This traditional Chinese courtyard hotel sets a new standard of True Boutique Hotel Experience with multiple accolade winner of the prestigious That's Beijing - "Best Boutique Hotel", TripAdvisor - "Travelers Award of Excellence" and Expedia - "Insider's Select", The "Red Wall Garden Boutique Hotel Experience" emotionally connects guests with the intense historical, cultural and artistic life of authentic and historic Beijing.



1. Please introduce yourself and what brought you to come to Beijing?

My name is Gavin Rimmer and I have now been permanently based in China for 3 years. Even though I am the General Manager for the award winning Red Wall Garden Hotel in Beijing, I am also an Associate Director for Stem International, a specialist Boutique Hotel Management Company based in Miami. I was presented with the opportunity to manage the Red Wall Garden Hotel shortly after being involved with 8 Design Hotels in Doha, Qatar, so I decided a move to China would be an ideal next step.

2. What did Red Wall Garden Hotel attract you when you decided to work for? What are your main responsibilities as a GM of this hotel?

When I decided to join the Red Wall Garden Hotel I saw a huge amount of potential for growth. The hotel was basically a blank canvass which allowed me to use my creativity and skills to create the Chinese Concepts we now offer today. As General Manager, I am totally accountable for all aspects of the running and profitability of the Hotel. This includes all day to day operations and the actual strategic management of the business.

3.What's your most rewarding moment through your career path? And any challenges?

I have many "moments" that I would consider highlights throughout my 23 years old career in hotels. One of the main Highlights or most Rewarding Moment would have to be being a champion for Hospitality Graduates from the International Hotel School in South Africa. I took up a position at a Leading Resort in South Africa and my role was to teach, guide and mentor over 200 students in the art of Hospitality Rooms Division. I did this for 18 months and was invited back to attend the Graduation of these Students. On the flip side I would say my most challenging position would probably have been to completely re-brand and refurbish a prominent Golfing Hotel in St Andrews in the United Kingdom. Here we were still to stay open for business while conducting all the work. It was an immensely challenging time for both customers and staff.

4.You have worked in Beijing for more than 3 years. Did you see any significant changes over hospitality industry in China comparing to western world?

The fundamental philosophy, or core values, of true Hospitality really remains the same anywhere in the world. The actual changes really are the cultures and traditions which need to be respected and brought into this way of working and thinking. The aim is always to achieve at least the Core Values and sometimes staff at all levels will identify new and modern ways of working whilst still encompassing their own Traditions and Cultures. This is the same in any country.

5.What's your perspective regarding of the development of Red Wall Garden Hotel within next five years?

The Red Wall Garden Hotel has grown quite tremendously over the last 3 years which has been so rewarding. The aim is to continually enhance our offerings for the future. Thereby making sure we stay up to date and offer our customers and exemplary experience at all the times.

6.Can you tell us more about the STEM™ management group? What's its ambition in China and any more expansions?

Stem Boutique Hotels is a True Boutique Hotel Management Company which is Headquarter in Miami. Our philosophy is very simple, to make sure we deliver a successful and profitable business to our owners. We are continually expanding and assisting in projects that require consultation before being developed into Hotels. Once developed, we commit to staying on managing these properties ensuring a solid operational platform is put into place.

7.What's your impression about China when you first came? Any difference that you have made after few years later?

I loved China when I first came here and I still feel exactly same with it. The people, the architecture, the open spaces, the changing landscapes, the cultures and traditions. China is a huge country and is forever changing and my only hope is that in future the Cultures and Traditions remain at the forefront of the current Urbanization and future Development of China.

8.Any hobbies or avocations during your spare time?

I travel quite a lot in any spare time that I do get or have. I have been fortunate to have seen most of Asia and have travelled extensively throughout China.

9.Give me a rundown of your daily work routine.

My basic daily work routine starts with my preparation at 7am for a Daily Management Meeting at 9am everyday with my entire Management Team. Usually my diary is filled with appointments, from interviews to meeting with important business clients and operational meetings. I try to structure my days so that I have enough time to attend to all the important business matters but also to take time to see and feel what our customers see and feel in all the outlets and bedrooms. I also try to spend time with our wonderful staff whilst they are working to see and monitor their welfare and performance. It is critical that focus is placed on the Customer Experience each day and I am continually looking at ways to Enhance the Customers experience at our Hotel.

10 Describe yourself in three words.

Passionate, Driven, Motivated.

Red Wall Garden Hotel – Home of the Courtyard Bistro

Opened in August 2010, The Red Wall Garden Hotel (www.redwallgardenhotel.com) is an oasis of tranquility in the very heart of the vibrant city of Beijing. It is located in ShijiaHutong, one of the city's most historic neighborhoods. Multiple accolade winner of the prestigious That's Beijing - "Best Boutique Hotel", TripAdvisor - "Travelers Award of Excellence", The coveted Tattler Best Restaurant Award for 2016 and Expedia - "Insider's Select", the hotel sets a new standard of True Boutique Hotel Experience. The "Red Wall Garden Boutique Hotel Experience" emotionally connects our guests with the intense historical, cultural and artistic life of authentic and historic Beijing.



Operated and Managed by STEM™ - "True Boutique Hotel" company

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